MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2026

DRAFT

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, February 19, 2026 in the Hal Fraser Conference Room, 140 W. Pine St., and via Microsoft Teams at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

Board: Karl Englund, Tasha Jones, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock, Jack Lawson, Mike Nugent - City Council Ex-Officio Board Member

Staff: Ellen Buchanan, Annie Gorski, Annette Marchesseault, Michael Hicks, Ashley Warren, Jilayne Dunn, Lesley Pugh

Public: Morgan Valliant, Lucy Rummler, Rob Roberts, Martin Kidston, Joshua Pitchford, MCAT

CALL TO ORDER
12:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
January 15, 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ACTION ITEMS
West Broadway River Corridor Master Plan (URD II / Wards 2 & 3) – Request for Endorsement, Recommendation to City Council for Adoption & TIF Request *(Marchesseault)*
Marchesseault presented the concept initiative for the West Broadway River Corridor Master Plan along with Morgan Valliant, City of Missoula Parks & Recreation and Rob Roberts, Trout Unlimited. In December 2025, Valliant and Roberts presented a draft of the Master Plan. At that time, there was the third of three public surveys on the master planning process that was still open when they gave the presentation. That public survey has since closed and pending a few copy edits the Master Plan is now complete. It is now before the MRA Board and the staff request is for a three-part motion. One that the MRA Board approve the West Broadway River Corridor Master Plan as a planning document going forward. Second that the MRA Board recommend to City Council and the Park Board that they adopt and/or approve the Master Plan. Lastly is a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) request for funding the next phase of the project which would take the Plan through a 30%

engineering level which will put it in a good position for permitting and make it shovel ready to seek grant funding from other sources.

Valliant said they are at the home stretch of getting the Plan adopted as a vision document for the project. As Marchesseault mentioned, there have been three public surveys that have gone out during this effort. The first one was to affirm the goals they set going into design, second to get thoughts and ideas on how to get to the Master Plan design, and third to confirm they hit all the targets they set for the community. Valliant said he feels really confident that they did. In general, there is strong support for what they've proposed and there is recognition that the Plan meets all of the original project goals. A lot of the feedback they heard and what they learned from the surveys and meetings with boards, committees and stakeholders is they really just needed to provide additional clarification in some sections of the document and expand some of the narrative. There were not any substantive changes to the Plan.

Valliant reviewed the remaining edits mentioned earlier by Marchesseault. They include adding more descriptive narrative and clarification to some areas, adding the public survey report, adding a land ownership map, adding more considerations around access and clarification on vegetation preservation areas, additions to the acknowledgment and funding section and updating dates, titles, headers and footers. There are also two perspective renderings that will be added to provide a feel for how folks are going to use the area which will be critical for fundraising moving forward. Nothing is changing the bread and butter of the Plan, it is really just providing more clarity to the document.

Valliant said consultants have outlined what it would take to get it through design and engineered into 30% engineering. On a project of this scope and scale there are a lot of things that have to be done to get it set up including federal funding, permitting, modeling and data collection, recreation design and continuing the feasibility study. By the end of this they will have 30% design with accurate construction cost estimates and can initiate meetings with permitting agencies to propose the project. It will allow them to start active fundraising because the project will be into a phase where they will know what it will cost. Valliant added they will also be able to identify phasing. It is a big project and will be broken into phases. Valliant said completion of the 30% design documents will cost up to $357,397. Trout Unlimited is the project manager and add real value to the entire thing. Given the scope and scale of the project, they felt a contingency should be added so they are ready and don't need to come back if they need a little extra money. Marchesseault said the contract with Trout Unlimited will be written for $357,397 and the contingency of up to $400,000 will only be used if there are unexpected items.

Englund referred to the list of things to be added into the Plan and asked about the letter from the Clark Fork Coalition (CFC) to be added to Appendix A. Valliant said during their public survey period the CFC submitted a letter stating they are generally very supportive of the project as it moves forward and cautioned them to consider long-term maintenance and what materials will get added to the water itself. He said there are no red flags, they are very supportive, but do recommend adding considerations they would already be looking at as they move into engineering.

Englund asked what water level loggers are. Roberts said it is an instrument you put in the water which measures pressure or depth. You also put a calibration logger in a tree that measures atmospheric pressure. Between those two things you can provide not only the level of water but also the flow that correlates to that water with some other surveys. Right now, they have been relying on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) gauges, which are upstream and downstream, for all of their modeling. The water level loggers will give them site-specific data so when they talk about wave features, rapids, etc. they know exactly what the river is doing at different stages and how it corresponds to the landscape.

Jones asked for a timeline if the recommendations are approved today. Valliant said they will bring it before the Park Board the 2nd Tuesday of March. It will go to City Council through the Climate, Conservation and Parks (CCP) Committee at the end of March. The goal is to have it adopted at the end of March/early April. They also need to have all of their copy editing done. The contract they have with their current consultants, SWCA Environmental Consultants, is written as such that it does cover moving into the engineering phase and so upon adoption and release of funds they can go right into engineering with no lag. They hope to be at 30% design by the end of the calendar year, and at 60% this time next year. They will apply for permits early next summer assuming all of the other funding is in place.

Reineking asked about the other funding. Valliant said Roberts has already started working with the private donors that came in on the Rattlesnake Dam and McKinley Dam removal projects. He said there is still a fair amount of State funding available for this type of planning and work so they need to get it to a point where they can apply for that and those application cycles are usually annual. They hope to be ready to apply for State funding by next fall. Roberts said the good news is they just started to see the Federal Government start to open the purse strings for this type of work. By this time next year they hope to have clearer information. Reineking asked if they will be back to the MRA Board for more funding to get to 100% design. Valliant said potentially. At this point there is real benefit in not stopping until they can get it shovel ready and they are very open to any funding that would be available. Roberts said often the way they might do a project like this is that once they get through the 30%, depending on how comfortable they feel with the cost estimate for construction and the rest of the process, they will bundle it all together and say this is what they need from now until it is finished.

Brock asked if this is one of the biggest projects Trout Unlimited is managing in the state. Roberts said yes, at the moment it is the biggest in the state. Jones asked if they are confident in the feasibility of what is being done here. Roberts said yes, and that is why it took three years to get to this point. He said he can't say for sure that 100% everything is feasible on paper, but they are 90% sure. Englund said by feasible he is thinking they are not doing any damage to the natural river and that what will be constructed within the river has a reasonable chance it will stay there for a while. Valliant said that thought is correct. Roberts noted the consultants advised them to think about the long-term, aesthetics, durability and how it addresses future development in the urban landscape of Missoula and what precedent they are setting. Englund asked if another concern is if it has been done on this big of a natural river before. Valliant said a lot of these projects are on rivers that have flood control. The feature they are putting in the water is largely that way and having most

rivers like this that accommodate big flow is often a side channel to be able to control the flow. It provides a level of mitigation of flood water controls to that feature.

Buchanan said that more recently, with complex projects like this, they will bring in a contractor to go through a process of project delivery method. She asked if they have thought of doing that with this. Valliant said he imagines they probably will. Brock asked if there will be one contractor for all of this. Roberts said that is where the Construction Phasing line item comes in and they will dig into the details and parse it out. Reineking said in talking about feasibility it also brings to mind that they aren't just putting money into a plan that isn't going to result in anything. She has seen other projects that Roberts has worked on over the years and is a big fan. She said they are lucky to have him in Montana and this project in Missoula.

REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING:

1. **THE MRA BOARD APPROVES THE FINAL WEST BROADWAY RIVER CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN AS A GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR FUTURE ACTIONS WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA; AND**
2. **THE MRA BOARD RECOMMENDS THAT THE PARK BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL APPROVE AND/OR ADOPT THE FINAL WEST BROADWAY RIVER CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN AS A GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR FUTURE ACTIONS WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA; AND**
3. **THE MRA BOARD AUTHORIZE UP TO $400,000 IN TIF FUNDS TO COMPLETE 30% DESIGN DOCUMENTS AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN AN AMENDED AGREEMENT WITH TROUT UNLIMITED TO MANAGE THIS PHASE OF THE PROJECT AND TO ENGAGE SWCA TO COMPLETE THE 30% DESIGN WORK, CONTINGENT UPON APPROVAL AND/OR ADOPTION BY THE PARK BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL.**

Brock seconded the motion.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).

Riverfront Triangle Development (Riverfront Triangle URD / Ward 1) – TIF Request Related to the Sale of the City-Owned Fox Theater Site *(Gorski)*

Gorski said in July the MRA Board endorsed the terms of the Purchase and Sale Agreement, Development Agreement and Land Use and Development Requirements Agreement with Averill Hospitality Group (AHG). City Council also approved the Agreements. Included in the Purchase and Sale Agreement are a couple of studies and analysis that are needed for the sale of the property as outlined in Gorski's memo. Closing on the sale of the property is likely to occur by the end of March. To get ready for the sale, staff are asking for Board approval of up to $20,000 to support the studies and analysis needed for the sale. That amount includes a 25% contingency in case there is something that arises between now and the end of March that staff is not aware of.

Jones asked what will happen after this. Gorski said closing will occur and one of the next steps to happen is that AHG will begin the design process. Buchanan said the City has an

agreement with AHG that they are going to design and build the public infrastructure. Englund asked if the next big decision the Board will make is to fund the infrastructure. Buchanan said yes. Jones said this is exciting for the community, especially that it is lining up with the West Broadway River Corridor project. She asked when staff thinks it will come back to the Board. Gorski guessed it could come back in six to nine months. There are current costs estimates based on 2017 designs with escalations built in. Buchanan said they don't think there is anything deficient in the design that will be changed from 2017 to now, but that will need to be verified. Englund asked if the Development Agreement has dates in it. Gorski said the Development Agreement came to the MRA Board in July and then to City Council. It provides a framework for the partnership with AHG. Buchanan said there are some dates within the Development Agreement about when AHG has to do certain things to keep it moving forward and allow the cash flow to work. Buchanan said she has put Dorsey Whitney, LLP on notice that staff will be looking at bonding in the District in the not-too-distant future. Buchanan noted there is language in the Development Agreement about what happens if they encounter environmental things that could not have been anticipated because when they start digging footers they will dig deeper than it has been dug before.

JONES: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD AUTHORIZE UP TO $20,000 FOR COSTS THAT ARE NECESSARY FOR THE SALE OF THE FORMER FOX THEATER SITE IN THE RIVERFRONT TRIANGLE URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT TO AVERILL HOSPITALITY GROUP, INCLUDING PROPERTY SURVEY, ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, TITLE INSURANCE, BOUNDARY FILING FEE AND RELATED COSTS THAT MAY ARISE.

Reineking seconded the motion.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).

NON-ACTION ITEMS

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report

Reineking asked about the availability of new housing funds approved by the State for the North MRL Triangle Redevelopment. Buchanan said the State put some money into a housing fund and applications are due in early April.

Ravara Contingency

Gorski said the project continues to move forward on budget and on schedule. There is information on the Front Step Community Land Trust website related to the applications for the income-qualified homes. The market-rate townhomes are also listed for sale right now.

FY26 Budget Status Reports

Dunn said the City is still getting updated reports from the County that allow the City Finance Department to deposit the tax increment funds and other tax funds into the right accounts. She said there are some non-tie-out reports that were sent back to the County because they weren't tying out for the City. MRA is sitting at 20-40% of revenue, but

normally would be sitting around 50% of tax increment revenue having received the first batch of taxes paid.

Dunn noted staff has received an increase in inquiries from developers looking at projects in the last few weeks, which it is an exciting change from the last couple of years.

Dunn said staff recently had a very productive meeting with Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS). Denise Williams, MCPS Business Manager, and Burley McWilliams, MCPS Facilities and Operations Manager, and Micah Hill, MCPS Superintendent, met with MRA staff last week to get to know each other. They talked about where MCPS has schools, future development in the URDs, and having more coordination between City projects coming on board and what the impacts might be on the school districts. Buchanan said with the NRSS URD developing, MRA staff asked if another school would be built or if Lowell Elementary School would be expanded. MCPS said with the fluctuations in student populations they generally just move the school district boundary. If Lowell is overflowing and some other elementary school has a deficit, they will do it that way. Buchanan said MCPS didn't realize that MRA can put TIF funding into public school buildings and they have one that is in URD III that has needs. Staff invited them to look at taking advantage of being in an URD.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OTHER ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Pugh

Lesley Pugh